

**b.) Amendments to the Claims:**

1. (Original) A method for the reduction of fouling comprising the steps of:

applying an electric charge to an object within the flow path of a fluid stream, wherein said fluid stream contains contaminants;

flowing said fluid stream past said electric charge; and,

adjusting the magnitude of said electric charge while continuing said flowing step.

2 - 4. (Withdrawn).

5. (Original) The method according to Claim 1, wherein said step of applying an electric charge to an object comprises applying an electric charge to a heat exchanger.

6. (Original) The method according to Claim 5, wherein said step of applying an electric charge to a heat exchanger comprises applying an electric charge to the chassis or shell of said heat exchanger.

7 - 11. (Withdrawn)

12. (Original) The method of Claim 1 wherein said step of applying an electric charge comprises applying a constant electric charge.

13. (Withdrawn).

14. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising determining the level of contaminants in the fluid stream.

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~15~~ 14 wherein said step of determining utilizes measurement of the turbidity of the fluid stream or an analytical measurement indicative of contaminant concentration of the fluid stream.

16 - 26. (Withdrawn).